

CONFIDENTIAL

1 April 1958

MEMORANDUM FOR: Mr. Robert Amory, Jr.

SUBJECT: Reflections on the Soviet Cessation of Nuclear Testing

The following reflections on the Gromyko speech are submitted to you on a personal basis. They are, however, an outgrowth of prolonged speculation on "means of countering International Communism" which is the function of SRS.

1. It may be suggested that in reacting instantly to Gromyko's speech, without our usual intensive "study," we have presented an impression of discomfiture (well attested in the press) which was not conducive to good propaganda. It will not do to go on decrying as propaganda all Soviet steps in the direction of a goal which most people overwhelmingly desire. Nor will refusal to accept a sound step, merely because it is initiated by the USSR which we believe is determined to achieve world domination, be reassuring to our allies, to our friends and to the uncommitted. Many would agree with Gromyko that "it is pertinent to observe that stubbornness is not the best thing in diplomacy."

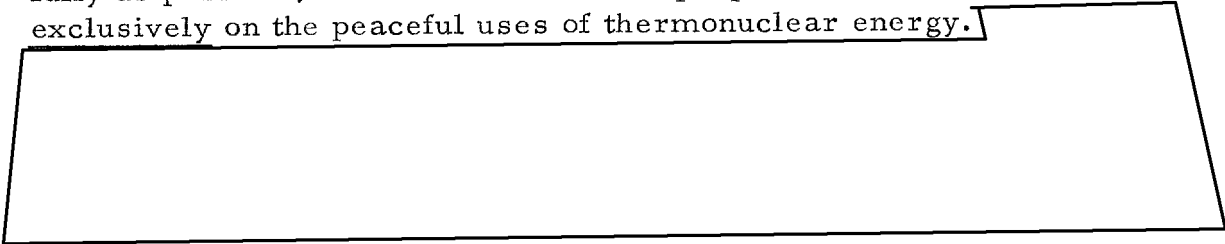
2. We have implied that the USSR probably would violate its own commitment to cease testing

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3. Whatever the justification for our position, we should be prepared for the likelihood that it will have less impact on world opinion than the Soviet announcement. Especially in Western Europe we should anticipate a vigorous favorable reaction to the latter. The effect on the Italian elections may be considerable, and in Britain and West Germany there will almost certainly be an exacerbation of the already bitter debate over US missiles.


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5. This step should be accompanied by further moves within the United Nations toward the cessation of production of all nuclear weapons and eventual destruction of stockpiles. There will inevitably be objections to reliance on the UN as a disarmament forum, but since much of the strength of our case against the USSR's handling of its cessation of nuclear testing lies in its bypassing the UN, we are more or less committed to continue supporting the latter's competence. The likelihood that we will eventually be confronted with overwhelming pressure to accept a total ban on nuclear weapons which would force a fundamental review of our global strategy, does not absolve us of the responsibility for taking a first step to halt the suicidal armament race which we are tragically pursuing.

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Chief, SRS/DDI